



# THE THATCHAM POSTMARK

THATCHAM and DISTRICT PHILATELIC SOCIETY



## AUTUMN EDITION 2011

Despite a few hiccups the past year has been a good one due to a varied and interesting programme of events and speakers. It is vital that we both encourage visits from and to other societies in the region and so we need some more members that are willing to display and talk about their collections.

Members will be pleased to learn that there will be a new trophy to be presented in memory of Keith Foster and it is to be awarded in the Postal History class. (See page 7 for some definitions).

Club stamps continue to return a small profit and we have recently purchased a large collection which is gradually being sorted and sold. This should return a good profit on the outlay.

The Monday meetings have been very well attended this year and had an interesting programme of events. The members have decided that the Monday meetings are to be extended to include July and August. It should be said that Jerry Wilson seems to have well and truly put his stamp on the Monday Trophy – don't let him get away with it!

At long last we have found an archivist. Julia Wilson has kindly agreed to take on the task as soon as the material can be gathered from the various depositories and handed over. School stamps organised by Juliet and Ian Keel continue to be deserving of your support and any surplus material that could be useful to young collectors will be gratefully received.

The 33<sup>rd</sup> annual stamp fair is scheduled for the 8<sup>th</sup> October. Although organised by Paula Cant it bears the Society name. Last year there was a lack of support in setting the hall up and putting away afterwards. This year Barney has kindly agreed to gather volunteers for these tasks.

Finally, may I offer my thanks to the outgoing committee for their efforts throughout the year and indeed to all members for supporting the Society. Dave Tanner. Outgoing Chairman.

**Year 44**

**Issue 114**

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*For further information on anything in this newsletter please contact*

**Martin Farr, Editor**

**Tel 01635 866437**

**or**

**Graeme Stewart, Secretary**

**Tel 01635 866942**

Two of the rare stamps in Sir Humphrey Cripps' collection

## *Autumn Photo Gallery*

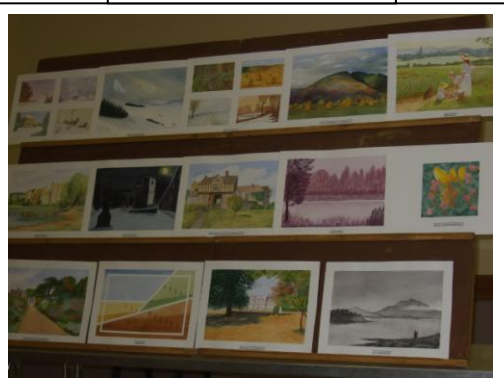


Graeme Stewart, John Baron  
and Dane Garrod  
who all stood in for the July  
meeting



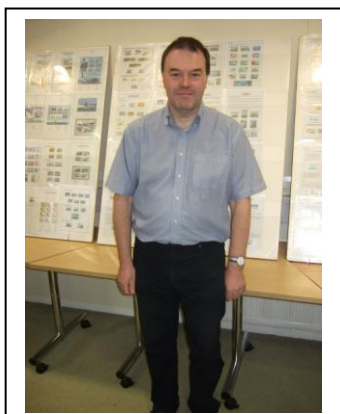
The August  
meeting

Just one frame of  
Wilf's wonderful  
paintings



John Tingey, Eric Osmond  
Ian Keel and Martin Farr

Barry Smith, Juliet Keel,  
Wilf. Sentance and Peter  
Schedler



Phillip Cant with  
"Messing about  
in boats"

The September  
meetings

David Beddoes  
and John Baron  
the auctioneers



### **Tycoon`s £20m collection for sale....all 80 albums.**

Sir Humphrey Cripps was one of life`s hoarders. When he died in 2000, his sons found an old shoebox in the back of his wardrobe containing thousands of train tickets from every train journey he had ever made.

Luckily for them, his hobby also extended to stamps, and over the course of 50 years, the chairman of Velcro had built up a collection that became one of the finest in the world.

His family thus decided to put all 80 of his albums up for sale in an auction that is expected to fetch £20 million, making it the most valuable stamp collection to go under the hammer. The sheer number of rare stamps has forced Spinks, the London auction house, to split the collection across nine sales over the course of 18 months to avoid flooding the market.

The treasure trove includes two of the world`s rarest stamps (see picture on page 1) the Post Office Mauritius two-penny blue, which may fetch £500,000, and the Virgin Island`s `Missing Virgin`, so called because the female figure was somehow omitted.

Sir Humphrey also owned the finest known Penny Black cover, from the beginning of the modern postal service in 1840, which is estimated to fetch £200,000. Oliver Stocker, the chairman of Spinks said: `When the collection arrived in London it was amazing to watch as our specialists turned the pages, of what may be one of the finest philatelic collections of our time, to reveal treasure after treasure.

The auction of the first part of the collection, British Empire stamps, began on June 28<sup>th</sup>. The `Missing Virgin` sold for over £140,000 while the 2d Mauritius sold for a record £1,053,090. Overall, in 48 hours, over £5M was realised. And this was just the first auction!

### **Past Meetings and Events**

#### **July**

On July 6<sup>th</sup> Louise Funnell and Martin Farr visited the Harwell Society. There was a small but appreciative audience of 14 members. Louise did the first half on `Pierre Gandon` while Martin did part two on `Myths and Legends`. One of the members had a large box of donated postcards which was rummaged through and several of interest were found.

July 21st

It was most unfortunate but, due to family circumstances, Emily Woodhams was unable to come and give her talk `From St Petersburg with Love`. At very short notice the services of others were called upon to fill the evening:-

Dane Garrod started the evening with the theme of `G.B. Royalty and other stories` and told the sad story of Amy Robsart the wife of Lord Dudley. She was found with her neck broken under suspicious circumstances. There was also a copy of one of her original letters to her tailor just 15 days before her death. Dane then showed and spoke about correspondence to and from royalty, items from the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland and Victorian letters to and from the Palace. Graeme Stewart then took over and showed some early covers of Newbury, Newbury 1d postmarks and mileage marks covers and then some Newbury cancelled 1d blacks and reds with duplex cancels.

John Baron resumed after half time with `Financial Odds and Sods`. that included insurance items from mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, letters to and from companies, items from 1696 of the `Hand in Hand` life insurance co. formed at Tom`s Coffee house and a lottery letter from 1726 to raise £1M at £10 a go! John then spoke about 3 pages of `Rebus` adverts and finished with RBS covers and contents and several sheets of banking items re the amalgamations to form the RBS.

All in all a very interesting evening indeed considering the very short notice that was given. Emily Woodhams is probably coming to give her talk in early 2012.

**August**

August 18<sup>th</sup> – What do I Collect – philatelic or otherwise.

Once again it never fails to amaze just how wide and varied the collecting interest of members are. There were quite a few members that brought along items as follows:-

John Tingey started the evening with `Mail Art` art that uses the postal system as its medium such as illustrated cover and cards and envelopes both ordinary and commercial. John showed some lovely sheets of hand-made items sent through the post and covers with the names and addresses in coded art form (shades of Bray I hear you say). A large display of very visual and artistic material.

Martin Farr showed four sheets of the `Mutiny on the Bounty` story ending with the settlers moving to Norfolk Island and then two sheets on the Bayeux tapestry and the 1066 invasion.

Ian Keel showed some assorted items relating to stamps such as old weighing scales, stamp holders and stamp boxes.

To finish the first half Eric Osmonde, the `Train Man` as he calls himself, showed quite a collection of postcard sets depicting old railway scenes, several commemorating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the GWR in 1988 and then lovely sepia pictures and cards of trains and scenes from 1926-60.

During the tea interval there was a general discussion about next years subjects for the Thursday meetings. Several interesting suggestions were put forward and duly noted for the next committee meeting.

Wilf Sentence started off part two with two full boards of lovely watercolours painted by his good self. Quite a range of subjects and techniques as well. What a hidden talent!

Peter Schedler – an avid collector of everything to do with Aloes, brought along some potted examples of aloe plants including the worlds smallest from Madagascar and spoke about the 589 species so far discovered.

Juliet Keel then produced, from a large box, a continuous display of little boxes of all shapes, sizes and materials including an early matchbox of 1820`s, a snuff box and an exquisite, expensive cornelian ware box of lovely design. They just kept coming out of the box!

Barry Smith then displayed postal material under the title `Fire and Water`. These sheets were airmail letters and correspondence from air accident crashes in South Africa. All the items shown were recovered and several showed water and scorch marks. It was obvious that most if not all of these items were thus very rare as many were one of only a few to survive a crash.

Graeme then finished off the evening with some early illustrated covers from Ross Dependency and Thatcham that showed fine line drawings.

Wilf. has written a book that has just been published – “Life Sentence” – a compilation of anecdotes, coincidences, experiences and thoughts in memory of his father George Anderson Sentence 1910-2000.

A donation of £20 or more, via Wilf, to the Prostate Cancer Research (UK) organisation will secure you a copy of this excellent book and Wilf's grateful thanks.

**September**

The Monday meetings restarted (at last) on September 5<sup>th</sup> when a guest speaker – Phillip Cant – came along to give an afternoon on `Messing about in boats` to an excellent audience of 21 members.

Part one was the development of `ship` stamps and how they evolved – The first countries to produce ship stamps – 1869 America, 1918 France, 1921 Japan, 1922 Russia, 1931 Italy, 1937 Germany and, not until 1951, GB. Phillip then showed many commonwealth issues, re-issues and overprints of the rest of the world, `wallpaper` issues of Russia and satellites and finally MS issues from around the world with a very fine large MS from the Marshall islands.

During the break it was agreed and decided that – by popular demand - the Monday meetings would extend into June and July from now on.

In part two Phillip showed many sheets of stamps from around the world – the submarine services from several countries – naval issues – tall ships stamps (some lovely illustrations) – and finally famous ships of the world such as Britannia, QEII, Santa Maria, Aurora, Victory, Nautilus, Avaroff, Cutty Sark and the Ark Royal.

What a wonderful display given by a very interesting and enthusiastic speaker. He must come again for another of his themes!

### **The Annual A.G.M.**

The A.G.M. was held on 22<sup>nd</sup> September and was followed by a mini-auction organised by David Beddoes. There were 23 members present. The previous minutes of the AGM in 2010 were taken as read and so were adopted. There were no matters arising.

The treasurer gave his report on the year's finances which remain quite healthy although several items such as hire charges and the prices of consumables had increased. He also stated that, if it were not for Westbex and the profits it brought, in the club would soon have serious financial problems. As a result there would be no need for any increase in subscriptions even though there were still several members who had not yet paid this year's subs. Discussion took place regarding their continuing membership and Graeme would contact them again. We also need new members as our numbers are dropping.

John Tingey gave a summary of Westbex 2011 and thanked the sub-committee of Ann Martin for the raffle organisation, Graeme Stewart for the dealers organisation and Martin Farr for the publicity and programme all of which contributed to a hefty profit of over £900 to the Society.

Thanks to Will Roberts who has taken over as the Westbex chair with Ann, Graeme and Martin continuing to serve on the Westbex Committee.

The news had previously been issued by email and post and so the evening continued with the now expected resignation of the whole committee in order that fresh faces might just come forward and serve on the committee in one or other of the posts now vacant. The President, John Baron, explained the situation at some length to a quite amazed audience particularly the possible situation of the Society having to cease to be if there were no committee. All was quiet for some time and John declared that he would take on the post of acting chairman as he did not like the idea of being the chairman of ABPS with no Society to represent!

This seemed to stir up some action from the floor and members began to put their names forward to serve on the new committee. Ian Keel volunteered to become the vice-chairman and persuaded Ann Martin to serve on the committee. Colin Bartholemew and Reg Rhodes said they would serve again and Tony Hillier and Barney Bardsley agreed to come onto the committee as well.

Both Graeme Stewart as Secretary and Mike Ward as Treasurer then both agreed to continue in their present roles and Nathan Gregory was re-elected as the Auction Secretary and Martin Farr as Publicity and Newsletter. There was then much relief that the above problems had been resolved quite easily and thanks were given to those new committee members for coming forward.

Discussion took place regarding the changing of the name of the Society to something like 'The Thatcham and District Stamp and Postcard Club'. It was awkward to change it at present due to the current name being used on official correspondence and Bank accounts. Nevertheless it was decided that all members would be canvassed early in 2012 and then the name can be officially change if that is the desired outcome.

Half-time refreshments of cheeses and wines were served (plus a few coffees and teas) and then it was time for the auction.

This was organised by David Beddoes from the estates of two past members and the listings were typed up by Dave Tanner. There were 100 lots on offer and John Baron was the auctioneer.

41 lots were sold and realised a total of £124.00

The evening meeting closed at 9.45pm.

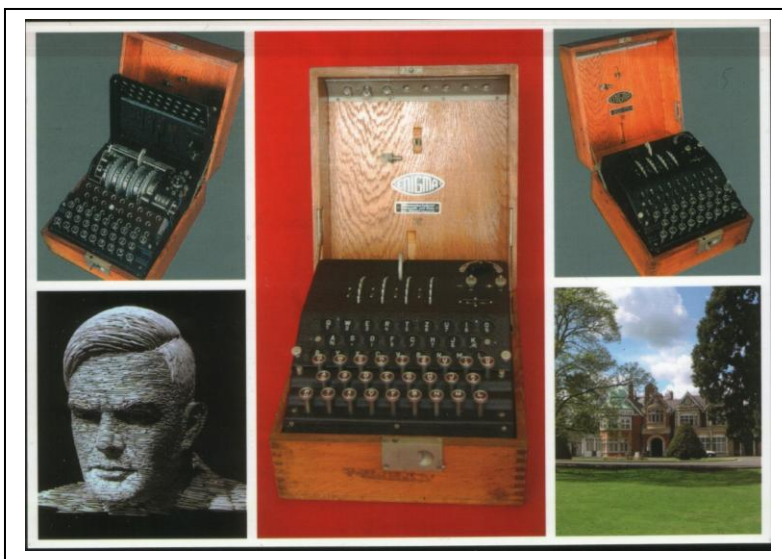


## The/Your Postcard Page

We would like to start a Postcard Page which will be included in each issue of the newsletter. I have started it off with a recent visit to Bletchley Park (see below).

For future editions I would like members to lend/send me a couple of postcards that remind you of something, reflect your interests, where you went for a holiday, just nice items you like, or ones that tell a story.

Looking at the sizes possibly 4 cards can be fitted on this page together with a suitable write-up to go with them. So two persons with two cards each or one with four cards will do the trick. I could also accept data by post or you could scan the cards and send by email.



On a very hot day in June we travelled to Bletchley Park – a place I had always wanted to go to. Once you got onto the right road it was not too bad to find and plenty of parking spaces. There was a reasonable entrance fee and then you could wander around at your leisure.

To see six different types of enigma machines was just amazing and the statue of Alan Turing (one of my heroes) made out of slivers of slate was awesome. Lots to see, the Bombe rebuild machine was working and the Colossus computer was ticking away nicely. The `History of Computing` exhibition was quite superb as was the Churchill collection.

Nice lunches were available in the original Hut 4 where much of the wartime decoding went on and the Mansion house was open for a look around. Then behind the house was the original post office where postal ephemera could be obtained and postcards purchased (see above). Got a few more but I like these two. Then we sent a coded message to the grandchildren in New Zealand which we watched being put together with a decoding sheet included (they worked it out too).

All in all a good day out and to think it is all run and operated by volunteers!

On July 15<sup>th</sup> the Queen unveiled a memorial to all those who worked at Bletchley Park and helped to crack the Enigma codes.

## USEFUL WEBSITES

Tony Bray for World new issues at [www.tonybray.co.uk](http://www.tonybray.co.uk)

Royal Mail for all past and new issues at [www.royalmail.com](http://www.royalmail.com)

The society website with lots of data and links at [www.tdps.co.uk](http://www.tdps.co.uk)

Avion Thematics – one of the best organised sites at [www.avionstamps.com](http://www.avionstamps.com)

\*\*The Avion website now incorporates the stock listings for Phoenix International\*\*

Portsmouth stamp shop for awkward items and covers at [www.portsmouthstampshop.co.uk](http://www.portsmouthstampshop.co.uk)

ABPS website with lots of links at [www.abps.org.uk](http://www.abps.org.uk)

## Recent and Future Royal Mail Issues

9 <sup>th</sup> September	Centenary of Aerial Post. MS and PSB
15 <sup>th</sup> September	The House of Hanover. Stamps and MS
16 <sup>th</sup> September	Birds of Britain. Post and go
13 <sup>th</sup> October	A to Z of Britain (PH). stamps
8 <sup>th</sup> November	Christmas Issue. Stamps and MS

## Subscriptions

We are now into the new society accounting year and there are still some members subscriptions that are now long overdue. Please make your cheques out to TDPS and send to the secretary Graeme Stewart or contact him or a committee member at any club meeting.

**This year, the Christmas competitions will include a new cup for Postal History presented by his family in honour of Keith Foster who was a keen Postal History enthusiast.**

### So What is Postal History ?

Because there is so much material it is impossible to collect everything. It is therefore sensible to give some initial thought as to where you should start. Do not start with a small subject – it may be interesting to collect letters from the village in which you were born, but if it was small with only a few postmarks you will find it frustrating and difficult to find material to add to your collection. Likewise if you decide to collect the whole of Europe you will be overwhelmed and give up.

The most commonly formed collection actually is one based upon the village or town from where your family originated. Most of the larger towns in Great Britain had a post office in the 18thC. These grew during the Industrial Revolution resulting in the opening of sub-offices. You might expand your collection to cover an area such as a county containing several towns and look at the routes that were used to carry letters between them. Such collections can incorporate material up to the present day.

Most people throw away the envelopes that the postman delivers. These may show slogans and advertising cancellations, metered pre-payment markings or phosphor sorting codes used by the modern Post Office machinery. These are the collectables of tomorrow and come free to your doormat! You may be interested in transport. Mail throughout the world has been carried first by hand, then by horse and carriage and then by ship, rail and air. All these methods can make fascinating subjects to collect and can be as broad or as detailed as you care to make them - for example the mail carried by rail could be for the whole country or on a specific railway such as the Great Western. From the 17thC all military campaigns produced large quantities of mail from soldiers and sailors. They were prolific letter writers to their families back home. Many of these letters have survived (you may have some family ones of your own) and fascinating collections can be formed around a campaign, occupation or even a large subject such as WW1 or WW2. Likewise collections can comprise of various aspects of the postal services such as registered mail, express delivery, postage due or the parcel service. The post offices of nearly every country in the world provided such services. Collections can be made of mail that travelled over different routes such as trans-Atlantic, Panama Canal, down a river like the Danube, or by air to Africa. You might make a collection of various postal rates for different routes, from different weights of letter or to illustrate the ever increasing postal charges. All these topics come under the general heading of POSTAL HISTORY.

For more information visit [www.postalhistory.org.uk](http://www.postalhistory.org.uk)

This article has been taken from the ABPS leaflet which you can find on the club table.

## “Club Stamps” corner

**TDPS Club Stamps** are looked after by Dave Tanner who will be present at most of our club meetings. There will usually be a Club Table at all stamp fairs held at the Memorial Hall and at Westbex.

The society has recently purchased a very large accumulation of world stamps that includes Papua NG, Cyprus, Malta, Gibraltar, Bahrain, USA, Greece, Spain, GB and many others.

Please let Dave Tanner or Reg Rhodes know about your interests and they will let you know what is available at club meetings and as it gets sorted out and priced up.

**Accessories.** Dave is also the contact for the purchase of all philatelic accessories – most of which are available to be ordered at a small discount.

Stamps of the World Catalogues. 2010 edition. (normal price - £200 ) – TDPS price £115 + p& p

Collect British stamps (normal price - £12.95 ) – TDPS price £10 + p&p

GB Concise (normal price - £30) – TDPS price £23.50 + p&p

A small percentage always goes to club funds. Give Dave a ring on 01256 780467

## Future Programme and Events

Monday meetings at 2.00pm for 2.30 start      Thursday meetings at 7.00pm for 7.45 start

Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct.	Postcards afternoon	Council chambers
Saturday 8 <sup>th</sup> Oct.	33 <sup>rd</sup> Annual Stamp Fair	Memorial hall 10 – 4pm
	In conjunction with Thatcham Festival of Arts	
Thursday 20 <sup>th</sup> Oct.	`Early Issues of South Africa` and `Stamp Production Techniques` with Brian Trotter.	Memorial Hall
Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> Nov.	`Wagons Ho!` with Tony Jordan	Council chambers
Thursday 17 <sup>th</sup> Nov.	To be announced	Memorial hall
Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> Dec.	Quiz and Social	Council chambers
Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Competitions and Christmas Social Evening	Memorial hall
Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> Jan.	`Creepie Crawlies`	Council chambers
Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> Jan	`Recent Acquisitions`	Memorial hall

### Officers of the Club

<b>President</b>	John Baron	01235 820120
<b>Acting Chair.</b>	John Baron	
<b>Vice Chair</b>	Ian Keel	01488 681500
<b>Secretary</b>	Graeme Stewart	01635 866942
<b>Treasurer</b>	Mike Ward	01635 864307

### Committee

Ann Martin	01488 682728
Tony Hillier	01635 864848
Barney Bardsley	0777 0376235
Colin Bartholomew	01635 865457
Reg Rhodes	01635 865721

<b>Auction Sec.</b>	Nathan Gregory	<b>Archivist</b>	Julia Wilson
<b>Publicity</b>	Martin Farr		